

Public Law 884

CHAPTER 840

August 1, 1956
[S. 985]

AN ACT

To establish an Alaska International Rail and Highway Commission.

Alaska International Rail and Highway Commission.
Establishment.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) there is hereby established an Alaska International Rail and Highway Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission") which shall be composed of twelve members, to be appointed by the President, as follows:

(1) five of the members of the Commission shall be Members of the Congress of the United States, not more than three of whom shall be members of the same political party;

(2) four of the members shall be selected from the executive branch of the Government, of whom, if practicable, one shall be from the Department of the Army, to be designated by the Secretary of the Army, one from the Department of the Interior, one from the Department of State, and one from the Department of Commerce; and

(3) three of the members shall be selected from the general public, one of whom shall be a resident of Alaska and one of whom shall be a resident of the Pacific Northwest region of the United States.

(b) The Commission shall select a chairman and a vice chairman from among its members.

(c) A quorum of the Commission shall consist of seven members. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers and shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

(d) The appointment of an officer of the Army on the active list as a member of the Commission is authorized as an exception to section 1222, Revised Statutes (10 U. S. C. 576), and does not vacate his appointment as a commissioned officer of the Army.

Duties.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of the Commission—

(a) to make a thorough and complete study of the economic and military advantages of additional highway and rail transportation facilities connecting continental United States with central Alaska;

(b) to make a thorough and complete study of the most feasible and direct routes of rail and highway transportation between the United States and Alaska, in relation to the economic benefits to be derived therefrom by the United States, Canada, and Alaska; and

(c) to make a thorough and complete study of the most feasible feeder rail and highway routes connecting coastal ports and cities with the rail and highway facilities between the United States and Alaska, determined most feasible and beneficial by the Commission.

In making such studies, the Commission shall give particular attention to the feasibility of rail and highway facilities between the Pacific Northwest region and Alaska. In determining the most feasible and beneficial routes for rail and highway facilities, the Commission shall take into consideration the proximity to such routes of suitable sites for airfields.

Cooperation with
Canada.

SEC. 3. The Commission is authorized to cooperate with the officials of the Dominion of Canada and of the Province of British Columbia and with any commission or similar body appointed for such purpose by the Dominion of Canada or the Province of British Columbia. The Secretary of State shall, at the request of the Commission,

arrange for meetings with such officials and with such commissions or similar bodies of the Dominion of Canada or of the Province of British Columbia.

SEC. 4. (a) The Commission may, in carrying out its duties under this Act, hold such hearings, take such testimony, sit and act at such places and times, and incur such expenditures as the Commission deems necessary. Any member of the Commission may administer oaths or affirmations to witnesses appearing before the Commission. The Commission may, without regard to the civil-service laws and the Classification Act of 1949, employ and fix the compensation of such experts, consultants, and other employees, as it deems necessary to assist it in carrying out its duties under this Act.

Powers.

63 Stat. 954.
5 USC 1071 note.

(b) The Commission is authorized to utilize the facilities, information, and personnel of the departments, agencies, and establishments of the executive branch of the Government which it deems necessary to carry out its duties under this Act; and each such department, agency, and instrumentality is authorized to furnish such facilities, information, and personnel to the Commission upon request made by the chairman or vice chairman. The Commission shall reimburse each such department, agency, and instrumentality for the services of any personnel utilized. The furnishing of information by any such department, agency, or instrumentality shall be subject to such restrictions as the head of the department, agency, or instrumentality deems necessary for the security of the United States.

(c) In performing its duties under this Act the Commission shall utilize all information available by reason of any surveys and plans made under authority of the Act entitled "An Act providing for a location survey for a railroad connecting the existing railroad system serving the United States and Canada and terminating at Prince George, British Columbia, Canada, with the railroad system serving Alaska and terminating at Fairbanks, Alaska", approved October 26, 1949.

63 Stat. 908.

SEC. 5. The Commission may delegate to any member of the Commission or to any committee composed of members of the Commission any of the duties and powers conferred upon it by this Act, other than the duty of submitting reports and recommendations to the Congress pursuant to section 7.

Delegation of powers.

SEC. 6. Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties.

Reimbursement for expenses.

SEC. 7. The Commission shall report the results of its studies and submit its recommendations to the Congress from time to time, and shall make a final report and submit its final recommendations to the Congress not later than two years after the date of enactment of this Act. The final report shall include estimates of the cost of construction of rail and highway facilities along the routes determined most feasible and beneficial by the Commission, together with estimates of the economic benefits to the United States, Canada, and Alaska. The Commission shall cease to exist, and all authority conferred by this Act shall terminate, thirty days after the date of submission of the final report.

Reports to Congress.

Termination.

SEC. 8. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums, not in excess of \$75,000, as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties under this Act. Until such time as funds may be appropriated pursuant to this authorization, the President is authorized to make available to the Commission, from any emergency fund available to him, such sums as may be necessary.

Appropriation.

Approved August 1, 1956.